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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 HARARE 000853

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [ASEC](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: TSVANGIRAI BRIEFS CHARGE ON STATE OF PLAY

REF: A) HARARE 843 B) HARARE 832 C) HARARE 826

Classified By: CDA Donald Petterson for reason 1.4 (d)

SUMMARY

¶1. (C) A somewhat dejected Morgan Tsvangirai told the Charge on October 27 that a three-hour meeting with President Robert Mugabe the previous day to discuss implementation of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) and an end to the MDC's disengagement had ended in deadlock. Commenting on his recent diplomatic visits to four Southern African countries, Tsvangirai said he told leaders that the biggest threat to the success of the Inclusive Government (IG) was the securocrats and that the GPA should be implemented. The leaders of those counties want the GPA to succeed, according to Tsvangirai, but he expressed doubts about the efficacy of SADC, and said the MDC would ultimately press for elections if there was no progress on the GPA. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) The Charge met with Tsvangirai at Tsvangirai's residence on October 27. In contrast to his upbeat determination when he briefed diplomats last week on the MDC's, Tsvangirai appeared tired and somewhat dejected. He said he had just briefed the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unionists and civil society representatives on the political impasse, and would brief diplomats tomorrow.

Seeking Support from SADC

¶3. (C) Tsvangirai first briefed on his recent trip to Southern Africa. He said he had told the leaders of the four countries he visited--South Africa, Mozambique, DRC, and Angola--that the MDC had not pulled out of government, but that disengagement from ZANU-PF was a first step. SADC as guarantor of the GPA had to work for its implementation. If they could not rescue the GPA, the MDC's only recourse would be elections.

¶4. (C) Tsvangirai said he had also emphasized to the SADC leaders that, in his opinion, the biggest threat to the success of the government was the securocrats whose continuing sponsorship of rule of law and human rights violations was calculated to highlight the absence of normalcy in Zimbabwe. He said there was an urgent need to rein them in; otherwise the constitutional process and efforts to achieve democracy would be imperiled, and Zimbabwe could end up like Madagascar.

¶5. (C) All the SADC leaders with whom he met, according to Tsvangirai, accepted that the GPA must be implemented. A failure of the GPA, which was the result of a major SADC initiative, would be a reflection on SADC. And, Tsvangirai noted, nobody in SADC wanted the specter of new Zimbabwe elections, particularly with the 2010 World Cup on the horizon.

¶6. (C) Tsvangirai said he was continuing to reach out to SADC. He had talked yesterday by phone to Swaziland's King Mswati, and had just sent an MDC delegation to Zambia to meet with President Banda. Yet he was skeptical about SADC's ability to pressure ZANU-PF.

Meeting with Mugabe Ends in Deadlock
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¶7. (C) A three-hour meeting of the principals--Mugabe,

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Tsvangirai, and Arthur Mutambara--ended last night in deadlock, according to Tsvangirai. Mugabe, who was "defiant," claimed his party would not allow him to appoint MDC governors and resolve other outstanding issues as long as sanctions were imposed, pirate radio stations continued to broadcast, U.S. congressional hearings provided platforms to supporters of regime change, and Western resources were used to support the MDC and civil society. When Tsvangirai brought up the issues of rule of law, media hate speech, and national healing, Mugabe had excuses as to why nothing was being done.

¶8. (C) Referring to Tsvangirai's comment at a diplomatic briefing last week that a spirit of cooperation existed between him and Mugabe (Ref B), the Charge asked Tsvangirai if he still believed he could work with him. Tsvangirai responded affirmatively, but admitted that ZANU-PF institutions could not work without Mugabe. He told the Charge he had confronted Mugabe and asserted that Mugabe was more concerned about remaining in power than the well fare of the Zimbabwean people.

Next Steps

¶9. (C) Tsvangirai confirmed that the foreign ministers of the SADC Troika--Mozambique, Swaziland, and Angola--would arrive in Harare on October 29 to mediate. He did not expect progress and expected the matter would be referred to the Troika heads of state. If they were unsuccessful in bringing the parties together, the MDC would seek a SADC summit of all heads of state.

¶10. (C) Tsvangirai noted that the MDC had canvassed its rank and file and there was overwhelming sentiment that the MDC not withdraw from the government. (COMMENT: Despite continuing human rights violations and absence of rule of law, Zimbabwe is significantly more peaceful than a year ago, and there is greater access to food. People are afraid new elections could bring a recurrence of violence. END COMMENT.) But the MDC leadership would not budge on its demand for resolution of outstanding issues; if this did not

occur, the MDC would take "appropriate actions."

¶11. (C) Tsvangirai acknowledged that although the MDC had not withdrawn from government, certain governmental actions would have to await reengagement. This included announcement of the formation of the Media Commission.

A Note on Sanctions

¶11. (C) Tsvangirai explained he distinguished between targeted sanctions against individuals and "non-personal" sanctions, such as those against banks. He was against lifting of the former, but would not object to lifting of the latter. He would not, however, publicly advocate the lifting of any sanctions, nor would he privately advocate the lifting of non-personal sanctions as a bargaining chip in discussions with Mugabe.

COMMENT

¶12. (C) Last week, there appeared to be a path for MDC reengagement (Ref A), but Mugabe and ZANU-PF have dug in their heels. In particular, hardliners such as Patrick Qtheir heels. In particular, hardliners such as Patrick Chinamasa, Jonathan Moyo, Didymus Mutasa, and the service chiefs appear to be working for a collapse of the government

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and an MDC withdrawal. Mugabe, who has the power to break the stalemate with the MDC, is at least for now siding with them.

¶13. (C) The MDC, which in disengaging acted out of frustration with ZANU-PF's intransigence, has no Plan B. Withdrawal from the government, which is its only leverage, is not an option as it is opposed by most MDC supporters, and would leave government control completely with ZANU-PF. For the moment, all the MDC can do is appeal to SADC and argue that a collapse of the government will have negative consequences on SADC and regional countries. Like Tsvangirai, we're skeptical that SADC will act effectively.
END COMMENT.

PETTERSON